

## Program Overview

Governor Patrick signed **Executive Order 523** on Tuesday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2010 establishing a Small Business Purchasing Program (SBPP) in Massachusetts.

The mission of the SBPP is to support the existence and growth of small businesses in Massachusetts by directing state spending for non-construction goods and services to SBPP-participating vendors in COMMBUYS.

**The Operational Services Division**, the Commonwealth's central procurement and contracting office, is responsible for SBPP development and implementation including policies, training, capacity-building, and annual benchmarks. For more information on the Operational Services Division please visit: [www.mass.gov/osd](http://www.mass.gov/osd).

## How will my company benefit?

There are many benefits for SBPP participation including:

- **COMMBUYS ACCOUNT:** Your company will receive automatic email notification of procurements posted in your areas of interest, and on-line submission of bid responses.
- **STATE BUSINESS PARTNER PREFERENCE:** Executive Departments conducting procurements for non-construction goods and services will RESTRICT AWARD to small businesses for bids between \$10,000 and \$150,000.
- **COMMBUYS BUSINESS DIRECTORY PRIORITY:** SBPP participating companies are listed ahead of non-participating companies in the searchable, central directory used by public purchasers seeking vendors.
- **FREE SBPP TRAINING:** Access to free training about the SBPP, the Commonwealth's procurement process and the Commonwealth's online bidding system, COMMBUYS.

## Need more information?

- To learn more about the SBPP and the many benefits of participation, please visit the SBPP website at [www.mass.gov/sbpp](http://www.mass.gov/sbpp).
- Businesses with questions about the SBPP or the COMMBUYS subscription process can request assistance by sending an email to the COMMBUYS Help Desk at [COMMBUYS@state.ma.us](mailto:COMMBUYS@state.ma.us)

## Is training available?

Training is critical to success in the SBPP. Review the training information on the website ([www.mass.gov/sbpp](http://www.mass.gov/sbpp)) carefully and be sure to register for classroom training as close as possible to the time that you enroll in SBPP through COMMBUYS.

For complete details on SBPP training, please go to [www.mass.gov/sdo](http://www.mass.gov/sdo) Instructor-Led training web pages and direct training specific questions to: [osdtraining@state.ma.us](mailto:osdtraining@state.ma.us).

## What is a Small Business?

An entity, including all of its affiliates combined, is eligible to participate in the SBPP if that entity, exclusively through COMMBUYS accepts the participation agreement and attests to the criteria below, as applicable:

- has its principal place of business in Massachusetts;
- has been in business for at least one year;
- currently employs a combined total of 50 or fewer full-time equivalents in all locations;
- has gross revenues of \$15M or less, based on a 3-year average, and;

Either

For any entity attesting to Business Type "For-Profit":

- is organized under laws of the Commonwealth or is properly registered to do business in the Commonwealth; and
- is independently owned and operated.

Or

For any entity attesting to a Business Type "Non-Profit"

- is registered as a nonprofit or charitable organization with and up to date on its filings with the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office; and
- is tax-exempt under Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.

# Small Business Purchasing Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)



## 1. Why is construction excluded from the program?

The SBPP is managed by the Commonwealth's Operational Services Division (OSD), which oversees the procurement and management of contracts for goods and services under 801 CMR 21.00. The SBPP does not include vertical or horizontal construction procurements since both are covered under statutes outside OSD's authority, MGL c. 149, §44A-H and MGL c. 30, §39M, respectively.

## 2. What does "RESTRICT AWARD to small businesses for bids between \$10,000 and \$150,000" mean?

Assuming that there is sufficient capacity, eligible small businesses should only be competing with other small businesses for small procurements. Executive Departments are now required to target notification of small procurements (between \$10,000 and \$150,000) to small businesses identified as such on COMMBUYS and to award a contract to the small business that submits the "best value" response. This should translate into more contract opportunities for eligible SBPP companies.

## 3. What is the SBPP Agreement?

Companies that are SBPP-eligible must agree to comply with the following program terms or face sanctions including, but not limited to, loss of their COMMBUYS subscription:

- provide true and accurate program information through the COMMBUYS account's My Profile features;
- update the COMMBUYS account's My Profile information to ensure accurate and complete program information;
- provide additional information upon request to support the program eligibility information provided; and,
- allow the Commonwealth to audit any of its business records pertaining to the program.

## 4. What is COMMBUYS?

COMMBUYS is the only official procurement record system for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Executive Departments. COMMBUYS offers free internet-based access to all public procurement information posted here in order to promote transparency, increase competition, and achieve best value for Massachusetts taxpayers. You can register at [www.COMMBUYS.com](http://www.COMMBUYS.com)

## 5. How do I declare my SBPP eligibility and accept the agreement?

Register in the Commonwealth's eprocurement system, COMMBUYS, and answer the qualification questions to participate in the "Program".

## 6. I am an SBPP-eligible small business. Does that mean I can be added to a Statewide Contract?

No. The SBPP only applies to Executive Department procurements for non-construction commodities and services valued between \$10,000 and \$150,000. However, at no point is a business "automatically" eligible to be added to a SWC.



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